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Rizezine

Volume 1 No. 3

WELCOME TO *RISEZINE*

Happy New Year:

To Your Health

"Take off all your clothes and put them in the bag provided, slip on the gown, climb on the operating table, roll over on your side and take a deep breath." It was the week before Christmas, and those were the nurse's instructions. Instantly, I realized that a colonoscopy was not going to be my favorite holiday gift. You see, when you're over 50 years old, the discomfort of a physical examination is no longer a mere cold stethoscope to the chest, or a tongue depressor popsicle stick down your throat while you cough. An annual physical becomes a full body cavity search.

Everyone over age 50 is supposed to get tested for colon cancer. But, according to the Cancer Society, only 44 percent actually do. The Cancer Society estimates that half of all colon cancer deaths could be prevented if everyone was screened. The Society wants us to get comfortable talking about this uncomfortable subject. The biggest barrier is embarrassment. I want to help you break through that barrier with this article.

I am very protective of my body. As far back as I can remember I loathed going to the doctor. When I was five years old, I stepped on a nail. I had to be taken to the emergency room for a tetanus shot. My older brother and cousin took me to Denver General Hospital. I made it through the emergency waiting room OK. I was fine when I was escorted into the examination room and the nurse plopped me up on the examining table. But, when she pulled out the needle for the tetanus shot, I probably should have said, "I would greatly appreciate your forbearance from touching me and breaching my skin with the sharp prickly object." Instead, I began to use all the curse words I had heard my older brother use when he was arguing with his friends. A few years later, while having a gravel-throwing fight on the playground, a rock lodged in my ear. I had to make another trip to Denver General Hospital. This time my mother took me to the emergency room. The doctor coiled what seemed like a 300 foot rotor-rooter into my ear to dislodge the stone. My mother was embarrassed by my choice words for the doctor on that occasion. When I got home after that visit, my mother sent me to the maple tree in our backyard to pull off a fresh new switch for her surgical procedure on my bottom. So I've

already had one bad experience with long coily things administered by a doctor. I ended up with a sore bottom after that, too.

Well, all of my friends are having a colonoscopy. I guess it's a baby boomer thing. I met with the doctor several days in advance of the procedure so he could explain it to me. I asked him about a total body scan. He told me that the colonoscopy was the way to go because during the procedure he can check your entire colon for cancer or any other abnormalities. If any polyps are found, the physician can easily remove them during the procedure. The doctor told me that the preparation was worst than the 30 minute procedure. I would have to go on a liquid diet for 2 days prior to the colonoscopy, with a strong laxative at 7PM the night before. I could take nothing by mouth until after the 9 AM procedure. He advised me that he would give me a light sedative before the procedure to calm and relax me. I told him that I wanted to be put to sleep! My philosophy is that the doctors can do whatever they want to me so long as I'm put out. I don't want to hear, "Oops!" "Did I just drop something in there?"

Two days before the procedure, I began the liquid diet. I started my day with a can of Ensure for breakfast just before I left the house at 8:00 AM. I didn't think about food for 2 hours, and then I became hungry. I was allowed to have fruit or vegetable juices, water, soda and Jell-O. I took a gallon jug of white grape juice to the office and drank it several times that day. I also carried several cans of v-8 juice to the office to break up the monotony. That night, I had two flavors of Jell-O for dinner. The next day, I began with my Ensure and drank juices just like the day before. I had my Jell-O at dinner and then...It's 7:00 PM. I began the 3 gallon golytly liquid laxative. I have to drink 8 ounces every 20 minutes. My best friend for the next 3 hours was the porcelain water closet. I was finally able to go to bed at Midnight realizing that the next day I'd get to eat chewable food.

Fast forward to the operating table, and the nurse connects me to an IV. The doctor enters the room and administers the sedative through the IV. I look at the monitor..... And the next thing I remember the nurse is telling me to put on my clothes. I slept through the whole procedure! YES! The Doctor enters the room and tells me that my colon had no polyps and was 100% normal. I won't have to return for TEN YEARS!

So you see a colonoscopy doesn't have to be a totally embarrassing experience. You have to search to find them but there are 5 joys you can experience during a colonoscopy examination:

5. There's nothing to hit the fan.
4. Any loose change found is yours.
3. You don't need to wear dress-up clothes to get your picture taken.
2. That's you on the video monitor and, no, you don't have tunnel vision.
1. The medical team refers to you as the "Outback Snake House".

If you're over 50, don't be embarrassed, have a colonoscopy.

IT'LL CRACK YOU UP!!

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